

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 2132

C 223 L 09
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Regarding instruction in civics.

Sponsors: Representatives Quall, Anderson, Carlyle, Dammeier, Probst, Sullivan, Johnson, Hudgins, Kelley, Chase, Wood and Santos.

House Committee on Education
Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education

Background:

The State Board of Education (SBE) is charged with adopting minimum high school graduation requirements. In 2006 the Legislature directed the SBE to define the purpose of a meaningful high school diploma. Part of the SBE's definition was that a diploma should "declare that a student is ready for success in postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship, and is equipped with the skills to be a lifelong learner." As part of its work, the SBE also recommended increasing high school graduation requirements from 19 to 24 credits. The SBE is continuing work on this proposal, and it has not yet been adopted.

One aspect of the recommendation is to increase requirements in Social Studies from 2.5 to 3.0 credits. The current Social Studies requirement is as follows:

- one credit in United States history and government, including study of the Constitution;
- one credit in contemporary world history, geography, and problems; and
- one-half credit in Washington State history and government, including study of the state Constitution.

The Social Studies credits are also expected to align with the state Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) in civics, economics, geography, and history.

Summary:

The purpose of a high school diploma is to declare that a student is ready for success in post-secondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship, and is equipped with the skills to be a lifelong learner. If, after the effective date of the bill, the SBE increases the number of Social Studies credits required for high school graduation, at least one-half credit must be

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coursework in civics. The content of the civics requirement must include: federal, state, and local government organizations and procedures; rights and responsibilities of citizens addressed in the state and federal Constitutions; current issues addressed at each level of government; and electoral issues.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	94	0
Senate	46	0

Effective: July 26, 2009